DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 225 203 CS 504 076

TITLE Theatre and Oral Interpretation: Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in "Dissertation Abstracts International," July through December 1982 (Vol. 43 Nos. 1 through 6).

INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.

PUB DATE 82

NOTE 9p.; Pages may be marginally legible.

PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Acting; Annotated Bibliographies; Audiovisual Aids; Blacks; *Communication Research; *Doctoral Dissertations; Elementary Secondary Education; Films; Higher Education; Literature; Music; *Oral Interpretation; Playwriting; *Production Techniques; Readers Theater; *Theater Arts; United States History

ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 16 titles deal with the following topics: (1) children's theatre activities at Karamu House in Cleveland, Ohio; (2) the development, implementation, and significance of story theatre as a theatrical art form and performance technique; (3) the influence of the Del Sarte system of expression on American acting from 1871 until 1970; (4) modifying creative drama for senior adult participants; (5) music as an integral design element of theatrical production; (6) multimedia projected scenery in three New York City Opera productions directed by Frank Corsaro; (7) contemporary solo performance of Homer's "Iliad" in translation; (8) readers theatre and Japanese No theatre; (9) sexual reform on the American stage in the Progressive Era (1900-1915); (10) the aesthetic receptivity of a dramatic art work; (11) the fairy tale in modern drama; (12) acting problems in creating a role for one-performer biography/drama; (13) conflicting concepts of the Federal Theatre Project; (14) play theory and the performance of literature; (15) images of black women in the plays of black female playwrights from 1950 to 1975; and (16) loneliness as motive, theme, and strategy in American theatre of the 1960s. (FL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED225203

Theatre and Oral Interpretation:

Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in Dissertation Abstracts International, July through December 1982 (Vol. 43 Nos. 1 through 6).

Compiled by the Staff
of the

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

University Microfilms International

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

CS504076

The dissertation titles contained here are published with permission of the University Microfilms International, publishers of Dissertation Abstracts International (copyright © 1982 by University Microfilms International) and may not be reproduced without their proper permission.

This bibliography has been compiled as part of a continuing series designed to make information on relevant dissertations available to users of the ERIC system. Monthly issues of Dissertation Abstracts International are reviewed in order to compile abstracts of dissertations on related topics, which thus become accessible in searches of the ERIC data base. Ordering information for the dissertations themselves is included at the end of the bibliography.

Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Abookire, Noerena
CHILDREN'S THEATRE ACTIVITIES AT KARAMU HOUSE IN CLEVELAND, OHIO 1915-1975

Anderson, Deborah Dorothy
STORY THEATRE: ITS DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND SIGNIFICANCE AS A THEATRICAL ART FORM AND A PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUE

Clarke, Janis Dawn
THE INFLUENCE OF THE DELSARTE SYSTEM OF EXPRESSION ON AMERICAN ACTING 1871 - 1970

Del Vecchio, Ann
MODIFYING CREATIVE DRAMA FOR SENIOR ADULT PARTICIPANTS: THE THEORIES AND METHODS OF SELECTED PRACTITIONERS

Frezza, Christine Anne
MUSIC AS AN INTEGRAL DESIGN ELEMENT OF THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

Guttman, Gilda Rae
MULTI-MEDIA PROJECTED SCENERY: THREE NEW YORK CITY OPERA PRODUCTIONS DIRECTED BY FRANK CORSARO

Hunt, Susan Ann
CONTEMPORARY SOLO PERFORMANCE OF HOMER'S ILIAD IN TRANSLATION

Josselyn, Carol
READERS THEATRE AND JAPANESE NO THEATRE: SUGGESTED ADAPTATIONS OF AESTHETIC PRINCIPLES, PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES, AND PERFORMANCE METHODS

Luter, Gary Sheldon
SEXUAL REFORM ON THE AMERICAN STAGE IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA, 1900-1915

Moore, John Joseph
A PHENOMONOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE AESTHETIC RECEPTIVITY OF A DRAMATIC ART WORK

Nicholson, David B., III
THE FAIRY TALE IN MODERN DRAMA

Plummer, Rick James
REVIVIFYING AMERICA'S HISTORICAL FIGURES: ACTING PROBLEMS IN CREATING A ROLE FOR ONE-PERFORMER BIOGRAPHY-DRAMA

Ross, Theophil Walter, Jr.
CONFLICTING CONCEPTS OF THE FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT: A CRITICAL HISTORY

Skinner, John Francis
PLAY THEORY AND THE PERFORMANCE OF LITERATURE

Turner, S. H. Regina
IMAGES OF BLACK WOMEN IN THE PLAYS OF BLACK FEMALE PLAYWRIGHTS, 1950-1975

Umlas, Rodney Jon
LONELINESS AS MOTIVE, THEME, AND STRATEGY IN AMERICAN THEATRE OF THE 1960s

CHILDREN'S THEATRE ACTIVITIES AT KARAMU HOUSE IN CLEVELAND, OHIO 1915-1975 Order No. DA8214861

ABOOKIRE, NOERENA, PH.D. *New York University*, 1982. 375pp. Chairman: Professor Jean White

In 1915 Russell and Rowena Jelliffe founded the Neighborhood Association, a settlement house in Cleveland, Ohio which was to become internationally known as Karamu House. This study traces Karamu Children's Theatre from 1915 to 1975.

The study investigates Children's Theatre activities under ten different leaderships, and demonstrates the goals and philosophies of the various Children's Theatre Directors, the classes, workshops and theatre-related activity for and by children.

The principal sources used were the programs, posters, correspondence and photographs from Karamu files. In addition the study includes interviews and written questionnaires. Rowena Jelliffe, co-founder and first Director of Children's Theatre, granted many hours of interviews, provided original memos, handwritten scripts of original plays and photographs and articles from the Jelliffe collection.

The researcher provides data showing that the Children's Theatre had been the opening wedge which encouraged the thrust of art and theatre as the central function for the settlement house. Drama and the related arts eventually became the vehicle for all other settlement activity.

The study points to the significant contribution Karamu Children's Theatre made to Children's Theatre in the United States. Random storytelling that began in 1915 developed into sophisticated activity that included full scale productions in theatre, drama classes, workshops in all the arts, and a continuing center for nursery care. From simple community support of the families of the children who performed in the playmaking activities, Karamu House attained national and international acclaim.

The study documents that Children's Theatre programs were used to release and attain the creative potential of the children involved and were an integral part of Karamu's contribution to the community it serves.

Included in the study is a chronological list of the productions performed over the 60 years spanned. Of special interest to researchers in the field of children's theatre are the dialect plays produced by Rowena Jelliffe. Ann K. Flagg's precedent setting work with children as participants in both creative drama and production is carefully documented. It was under Flagg's leadership that Karamu Children's Theatre gained national recognition.

Reproduction of original photographs, program covers and publicity releases add depth and authenticity to the study.

STORY THEATRE: ITS DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND SIGNIFICANCE AS A THEATRICAL ART FORM AND A PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUE Order No. DA8213953

ANDERSON, DEBORAH DOROTHY, PH.D. *University of Minnesota*, 1982. 256pp.

It is the purpose of this study to define story theatre, developed by Paul Sills in 1968, draw conclusions about its relationship to other forms of storytelling and enactment, examine its particular relationship to folklore and other narrative forms, establish its essential performance characteristics, and explore its suitability for child audiences.

It is concluded that story theatre is a method of dramatizing narratives in which scenes are located on stage; narration is delivered in the past tense, enactment in the present; and both are integrated and shared collectively by an acting company. Story theatre is also categorized as a popular entertainment and comparisons are made to earlier popular forms: vaudeville, *commedia dell'arte* and the circus.

Although story theatre bears similarity to collective forms of oral interpretation, readers theatre and chamber theatre, distinctions are drawn. It is also determined that folklore, particularly fairy tales, are the most suitable type of narrative for story theatre dramatization. Other identifying characteristics of story theatre include: use of neutral space, integration of Brechtian "alienation" techniques, a format similar to the vaudevillian "ordering of acts," improvisational development of a scenario, integration of a musical score, and minimal use of scenery, props and costumes.

The processes used to develop story theatre are also identified: improvisation, transformation of free space, collective narration, multiple characterization, and use of mime and circus technique. Suggestions for developing these skills are included and it is recommended that proficiency in any or all of these areas be a major determining factor when selecting actors for story theatre performances.

A variety of story theatre productions are discussed and their adaptive methods analyzed in order to determine why certain approaches failed and others succeeded. Story theatre adaptations of folklore as well as performances of modern children's fiction are also examined and used to illustrate story theatre's appropriateness for child audiences.

Finally, it is suggested that experimentation with methods of adapting folklore and modern fiction for both children and adults be continued, and techniques for utilizing story theatre as a vehicle for presenting original dramatic material be explored.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE DELSARTE SYSTEM OF EXPRESSION ON AMERICAN ACTING 1871 - 1970 Order No. DA8215128

CLARKE, JANIS DAWN, PH.D. *Washington State University*, 1982. 79pp. Chairman: Laurilyn Harris

François Delsarte and the philosophy of expression that he formalized have long been scapegoats in American acting. Due to excesses and misinterpretations by some American Delsartians, all of Delsarte's ideas have been condemned as causes of florid, stilted and stereotyped acting and dismissed by the majority of acting commentators in theory. In practice, however, the ideas of the Delsarte System of Expression pervade American acting in both considerations of exercise and notions of how to best portray emotion.

This study attempts to focus on the growth of the Delsarte System and the distribution of Delsarte's ideas through an examination of both nineteenth century sources and twentieth century acting texts. The Delsartian ideas usually found in American acting include division of the body into three zones roughly corresponding to intellectual, emotional and physical actions, the concept of a direct relationship between emotions and physical expressions and the use of exercise for relaxation, poise and subtle movement.

The basics of Delsarte's system survive in American acting for two reasons: first, they represent reasonable assumptions about the nature of human expression and second, they are useful tools of analysis and invention.

MODIFYING CREATIVE DRAMA FOR SENIOR ADULT PARTICIPANTS: THE THEORIES AND METHODS OF SELECTED PRACTITIONERS Order No. DA8206341

DEL VECCHIO, ANN, PH.D. *University of Minnesota*, 1981. 230pp.

Since the early 1970's, there has been an increased use of Creative Drama for senior adults. It seems that when a child-centered activity is applied to an elderly population, modifications must be made. To investigate these modifications, eleven practitioners of senior drama were chosen on the basis of experience in this area, academic qualifications, written works on senior drama and verification by the Children's Theatre Association of America's Senior Adult Theatre Committee. The theories and methods of Isabel Burger, Joyce Chambers-Selber, Stuart Kandell, Claire Michaels, Milton Polsky, Abbe Raven, Rhoda Feuher, Patricia Sawyer, Anne Thurman, Naida Weisberg and Rose Pavlow were investigated.

First, the influences upon the modifications are examined, including aging characteristics and workshop settings. Then the modifications made by the practitioners of junior drama specialists Winifred Ward, Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote are explored.

The influential aging characteristics include physical and

emotional problems, theories of positive aging and senior adult interests. Physical problems encompass a general decline in health, sight loss, hearing loss, slow perception, slow psychomotor performance, arthritis, heart disease, high blood pressure, asthma, stroke and mental disorders. Senior participants also experience emotional difficulties, such as loneliness, boredom, worthlessness and resistance to change, all of which may be related to such life cycle changes as retirement, widowhood and empty nest. To guide seniors to possible solutions to aging problems, positive aging theories were incorporated. As an aid to choosing the appropriate content for playmaking, senior adult interests, including family relationships, life review and death and dying were examined by the practitioners.

Another influence was the workshop setting which varied between sponsoring organizations. In senior centers, activities were altered because of fluctuating attendance, the administration's shifting of the workshop space and the expectation of a formal performance. In residences, the leaders adapted to large classes, budgetary restrictions and alterations in the workshop space. In nursing homes, twenty to thirty severely handicapped participants were the norm. Close communication with the nursing was required, along with adjusting to the "depressing" atmosphere.

The practitioners modified playmaking objectives and methods in accordance with the above-mentioned influences. Ward, Way and Heathcote seek to develop in children the physical self, imagination, speech, emotion and intellect, as well as foster social interaction, cooperation and an appreciation of drama. Senior drama seeks to tap the same resources; however there is one, fundamental difference: child drama attempts to channel abundant energy into self-discovery and development in order to aid young people in growing-up. Senior drama is a means of "rediscovering" often forgotten human resources in order to cope with the, at times, traumatic process of growing old. The *generation* of energy becomes the most fundamental objective of senior drama. This generation is sought first through physical awareness and exercise. Then the awareness and release of crippling negative feelings and attitudes is sought along with the generation of positive attitudes that will help seniors gain control of their lives rather than relinquish them to death. Creative powers--imagination, emotional memory and concentration--are then sought to further aid seniors in the development of problem-solving abilities. Opportunities to communicate verbally and physically are then offered in senior drama in order to ease loneliness, develop new relationships, foster an understanding of others and develop feelings of self-worth. Finally, the development of theatrical skills often for the sake of performance--a goal not traditionally chosen in child drama--is sought usually in centers.

MUSIC AS AN INTEGRAL DESIGN ELEMENT OF THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

Order No. DA8222787

FREZZA, CHRISTINE ANNE. PH.D. *University of Pittsburgh*, 1982. 256pp.

The broad purpose of this dissertation is to improve theatrical production through an informed use of music. Just as directors use sets, lights, and costumes to enhance their productions, so they can use music. There are courses and manuals which help a director use these other design elements to greatest advantage, and frequently the director has at his disposal designers in one or all of these areas to aid the development and realization of a production concept. There are no such courses and manuals in music design (music as it is applied to theatrical production) other than in the areas of opera and musical comedy, and few trained music designers, except in the professional theatre. The average director, then, must choose his own music, usually from records, without benefit of either a music designer or training in music design.

This dissertation seeks to provide a model for such training through analyzing the following areas: the functions that music may serve within a dramatic context, and the various theatrical and musical factors influencing the choice of appropriate music for a variety of production concepts.

The dissertation demonstrates not how music *should* be used in theatre, but how it has been used, is being used, and *may* be used to enhance theatrical production.

MULTI - MEDIA PROJECTED SCENERY: THREE NEW YORK CITY OPERA PRODUCTIONS DIRECTED BY FRANK CORSARO

Order No. DA8214878

GUTTMAN, GILDA RAE, PH.D. *New York University*, 1981. 292pp.
Chairman: Professor Jean W. White

Using projected scenery, the New York City Opera has successfully produced operas whose scenic requirements had previously been regarded as prohibitive.

The purpose of the research was to describe and analyze the techniques used in the production of *The Makropoulos Affair, A Village Romeo and Juliet* and *Die tote Stadt*, the three multi-media operas which were directed by Frank Corsaro.

The study surveys briefly the history of the use of projections and projected scenery in opera and theatre; describes the impact, as perceived by the filmmakers, participants and observers of the three opera productions; describes and analyzes the production methods and the equipment used to realize the scenery. The study also synthesizes the data to identify the innovative production techniques and unique equipment used in the productions.

The conclusions reached at the end of the study were that the New York City Opera Company has become flexible and more open to new modes of creative production techniques. By making Multi-Media productions part of their standard repertory and reviving them with regularity, the New York City Opera has set a precedent in the realm of repertory opera production. Due to the City Opera's production requirements and Frank Corsaro's production demands, innovative and unique production equipment was designed and fabricated for the use of the New York City Opera Company and that in most cases, later models of those especially designed pieces of equipment became standard items in the catalogues of many audio-visual supply companies.

CONTEMPORARY SOLO PERFORMANCE OF HOMER'S *ILIAD* IN TRANSLATION

HUNT, SUSAN ANN, PH.D. *University of Southern California*, 1982.
Chairperson: Professor Janet Bolton

It was the purpose of this study to provide a means by which Homer's *Iliad* can receive contemporary attention through its original medium--solo oral performance. The study investigated four areas of historical and critical concern: (1) background information, (2) translation selection, (3) oral poetic style and content of the *Iliad*, and (4) solo oral performance of the *Iliad*.

Chapter II traces the concurrent developments of ancient Greek society and oral literature from ca. 2000 B.C. (the Indo-European invasions) to permanent alphabetization of the epics by Alexandrian scholars (200 B.C. - 74 A.D.).

Chapter III examined the process of translation of the *Iliad* from Homeric Greek into English. Characteristics of the Greek text which should be sought in translations were identified, and nineteen English translations were compared in light of those characteristics. Richmond Lattimore's translation most thoroughly reflects the whole of Homer's verse, style, and content.

In Chapter IV the epic structure and content of the *Iliad* was analyzed in terms of narrative technique, plot, culture, and character delineation.

Chapter V focussed on problems of contemporary performance of the *Iliad*. In addition to acquiring the foundational information discussed in Chapters II-IV, the student must also develop an aural/oral sensibility that facilitates the embodiment of mental images. Classical and contemporary audiences were compared, and recommendations were made for adapting the performance setting, introduction, content, and mood. Vocal and physical techniques that are suggestive rather than impersonative should be supported by physical evidence of ageless pride and athletic grace in all characters. Uses of costuming, properties, and music and other performance possibilities were discussed.

Chapter VI included a summary, review of conclusions, and recommendation for further research.

READERS THEATRE AND JAPANESE NŌ THEATRE: SUGGESTED ADAPTATIONS OF AESTHETIC PRINCIPLES, PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES, AND PERFORMANCE METHODS

Order No. DA8226549

JOSSELYN, CAROL, PH.D. *University of Washington*, 1982. 230pp. Chairperson: Dr. Robert M. Post

In recent years, oral interpretation scholars have been looking to other theatre arts and dramatists to inform Readers Theatre. Studies comparing Grotowski, Stanislavski, and Brecht with oral interpretation have done much to contribute to the field of Speech Communication. The goal of this study was to examine the Japanese Nō theatre for discoveries which might be useful in Readers Theatre.

The Nō theatre was chosen because, like oral interpretation, it emerged out of a narrative oral tradition in a pre-literature culture. Despite the fact that the Nō theatre is Asian and was influenced by Buddhism, while Readers Theatre is Occidental and was influenced by Christianity, the two theatres have aesthetic components in common which are worthy of note.

The precepts of suggestion, simplicity, austerity, and restraint are evident in the production and performance attributes of both theatres. Both use a predominantly bare stage, nonillusory property and set design, and symbolic movement and gesture. Because of these basic similarities, there are modified adaptations which can be made from the Nō for use in Readers Theatre. Some of these techniques have been used in oral interpretation and their comparison with the ancient Nō theatre serves to reinforce their use in Readers Theatre. For example, dance and music as inspired by the Nō can reinforce theme and provide rhythm while masks and symbolic costuming can enhance characterization. Such production decisions are contingent upon the literature being performed and should not be made strictly for theatrical effect.

The concepts presented in this study were applied in a Readers Theatre production directed by the writer, in which Nō plays were performed and many Nō technical and performance devices were used. Nō plays are compatible with the Readers Theatre format because they are of appropriate length and contain thematic variation without calling for fully realized action.

The main conclusion of this study is that the Nō theatre of Japan can provide innovative methods of performing literature which are compatible with the traditional mode of Readers Theatre production and performance.

SEXUAL REFORM ON THE AMERICAN STAGE IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA, 1900-1915

Order No. DA8213673

LUTER, GARY SHELDON, PH.D. *The University of Florida*, 1981. 264pp. Chairman: A. F. C. Wehlburg

The American theatre played a part in the reform movement of the Progressive Era (1900-1915). Plays were written and staged dealing with issues which were making headlines in *McClure's*, *Arena*, *Masses* and other muckraking journals and magazines. Probably the most controversial reform issue depicted on stage was sexual reform. Sexual reform embodied a number of ideas. Reformers including Jane Addams, Margaret Sanger, Dr. Prince Morrow, Moses Harmon, Emma Goldman and Charlotte Perkins Gilman advocated legislation regulating trade in prostitution, enlightenment regarding sex hygiene, eradication of the double standard, and changes in nineteenth century notions of the woman's place in society.

Paradoxically the spirit of being "thy brother's keeper" which had initiated reform also retarded the progress of reform. Vice societies and censorship organizations, typified by Anthony Comstock and his agents, sought to keep the theatres in check as it daringly dramatized such taboo topics as eugenics, free love, prostitution, and veneral disease control. Productions of Clyde Fitch's *Sapho* (1900), Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1905) and Eugene Walter's *The Easiest Way* (1909), which argued against the sexual double standard, were censored and suppressed by outraged anti-vice crusaders.

Progress in the drama, however, did occur. Red-light plays, such as *The Fight*, *The Lure*, *The House of Bondage* and *The Traffic*, although sensationalizing the social problem of prostitution, opened the stage to further treatments of previously taboo subjects. Brieux's *Damaged Goods* (1913) and Beulah Poynter's *The Unborn* (1915), produced under the auspices of the *Medical Review of Reviews*, proved that the theatre could be utilized as an educational tool by sexual reformers.

Special interest groups used the theatre for propaganda purposes. Socialists and feminists, like John Reed and Joseph Medill Patterson, Rose Pastor Stokes and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, wrote plays on subjects of moral reform which attacked capitalism and sexual inequality respectively. Suffragists staged Elizabeth Robins' *Votes for Women* (1909) and other plays and pageants on behalf of their political cause. In fact, dissatisfaction with and rebelliousness toward *status quo* morality which informed the plays of Progressive Era dramatists continue to be felt in the American theatre today.

A PHENOMONOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE AESTHETIC RECEPTIVITY OF A DRAMATIC ART WORK

Order No. DA8223997

MOORE, JOHN JOSEPH, PH.D. *State University of New York at Buffalo*, 1982. 95pp.

Our modern perceptivities are particularly challenged to regard something as a superior work of art or, for that matter, a work of art at all. Subjectivists and objectivists of literary and dramatic response and criticism are widely separated in their approaches to works of art; hence, it has become necessary to approach art works with an open and acute aesthetic consciousness so one can actually discover what makes a work of art and what principles can inform us that it really exits.

In order to achieve this end, Sam Shepard's play, *Curse of the Starving Class*, was chosen as a *locus classicus* and the dissertation addressed itself to the specific question: Does Sam Shepard's art work, *Curse of the Starving Class*, demonstrate essential features as it passes through the performers and becomes a work of art for the audience?

The procedural methodology involved an analytical application of Roman Ingarden's phenomenological aproach to the aesthetic receptivity of the *locus classicus*. This was accomplished by interviewing the author, Sam Shepard, and theatre artists in Buffalo, New York, and Tempe, Arizona, who were involved in productions of the art work. Also, I interviewed selected members of the audience who had varying degrees of competency and different regional backgrounds.

In gauging the various receptivities to the art work, essential and invariable threads emerged that allowed one to establish unities of objective features that were experienced in the aesthetic consciousnesses of the spectators as they transformed the art work into a work of art, i.e., the aesthetic object of contemplation.

The findings showed that Ingarden's stance is not a mere philosophical conviction for the spectators made concretizations (Ingarden's word) outside of the art work and created the same higher level aesthetic object and, thus, established a confirmation for objective aesthetic judgments.

Further, the formed nexus between the objective structure of the art work with the subjective structure of the aesthetic consciousness supports an objectivity to works of art that should encompass further studies into all areas of the fine arts.

THE FAIRY TALE IN MODERN DRAMA

Order No. DA8222969

NICHOLSON, DAVID B., III, PH.D. *City University of New York*, 1982. 442pp. Adviser: Professor Daniel Gerould

This study of the uses of fairy tales and their motifs in modern European drama begins with the symbolist reaction against realism and naturalism in the last decade of the 19th century. In the vanguard of a second romantic revolution, Maeterlinck, Strindberg, Hauptmann, Sologub, Ibsen, Hofmannstahl, and Yeats all turned to fariy tales and other anti-realistic forms to bring poetry and spiritual meaning back into the theatre. Elements from the folk tales of Perrault and the Grimms and from the literary tales of H. C. Andersen can be found in their plays, as well as allusions to a tradition of fairy lore and legend about contacts between the human world and a numinous Other World of spirits and the dead.

Fairy-play plots typically take one of two forms, either the

"Undinepattern," which envisages the conflict of two worlds as a tragic relationship between a human being and a fairy lover, or the A-B-A "Visit to Fairyland," a pattern of enchantment and disenchantment like that in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. These two structures can be made to carry a great variety of tones and meanings, ranging from sunny optimism to the darkest pessimism. Cocteau, Giraudoux, and Lesya Ukrainka, for example, have written fairy plays of spectacle and high theatricality. Ibsen, Hauptmann, Hofmannstahl and others see in the opposition of two worlds an allegorical conflict between art and life. Ironists like Barrie, Bergman, Gombrowicz, and Audiberti, following Maeterlinck, invert their tales and the expected happy ending to produce disillusionment and despair. Evgeny Shvarts applies the melodramatic fairy-tale moral scheme to modern totalitarian politics and produces emancipatory parables of heroism, defending the right of the community to define itself in the face of the dragon-tyrant.

The symbolists and playwrights after them have amply demonstrated the importance of simple folk forms as literary resources. Writers turn to fairy tales not merely because, as fundamentally dualistic structures, the tales are ready-made for adaptation, but also to take advantage of their fantasy, magic, and symbolism. Most of all, playwrights are challenged by the standing invitation to reinterpret their archetypal structures, to discover new ways to make them speak from the stage to each new generation.

REVIVIFYING AMERICA'S HISTORICAL FIGURES: ACTING PROBLEMS IN CREATING A ROLE FOR ONE-PERFORMER BIOGRAPHY-DRAMA Order No. DA8215821

PLUMMER, RICK JAMES, PH.D. *Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*, 1982. 269pp. Major Professor: Dr. Christian H. Moe

The dissertation presents an historical analysis of one-performer biography-drama in America in order to uncover acting problems associated with its production. It traces the development of the form in America, examines its aesthetic principles through analysis of four representative playscripts and the published reviews of dramas produced in New York and/or on tour, and documents the thoughts of several actors who have created roles for historical monodramas. The following conclusions are drawn in the study: (1) one-performer biography-dramas may be divided into two major structural categories--those that attempt to re-create the historical figure in concert and those that attempt to trace the life-journey of the historical figure; (2) the historical roots of one-performer biography-drama go deep into American vaudeville, and it is especially indebted to the work of popular monolinguists; (3) the characters depicted in historical monodrama are often the representatives of national character; (4) playwrights combine presentational sequences of direct address with representational "scenes"; (5) actors use the form to insure financial security; and (6) performing a one-performer biography-drama is both demanding and rewarding.

Acting problems associated with one-performer biography-drama are similar to those in conventional, multi-performer drama, only intensified. The success of a one-performer biography-drama depends, as in any production, on a memorable performance. But because of the highly recognizable image of the historical figure, the actor in historical monodrama must deliver a total impersonation of enormous proportions. This requires increased physical and vocal impersonation and, perhaps most importantly, extensive research of the historical figure in order to capture the spiritual essence of the character. Moreover, performing a character in historical monodrama requires special skills in: (1) Imaging--The master-storyteller's ability to make vivid events and characters and to interact with an audience. (2) Continuity--The ability to memorize a massive amount of material and to concentrate on the pattern of the words and the shifting focus between "scene" and direct address without experiencing memory blocks or other self-cueing problems. (3) Energy--The ability to focus energy onstage as well as offstage, to share energies with an audience, and to sustain the great physical strength needed during a performance and throughout the extended run.

CONFLICTING CONCEPTS OF THE FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT: A CRITICAL HISTORY Order No. DA8213866

ROSS, THEOPHIL WALTER, JR., PH.D. *University of Missouri - Columbia*, 1981. 231pp. Supervisor: Dr. Larry D. Clark

During the depression of the 1930's, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt established numerous federal work projects to assist in the nation's economic recovery. As a division of the Works Progress Administration, the Federal Theatre Project employed thousands of destitute theatre artists in a nationwide relief program. Striving for social, cultural, and artistic significance within a controversial political framework, the Federal Theatre, in many ways, epitomized the bold experimentation and creative spirit of that era.

Unlike previous scholarship on Federal Theatre emphasizing the results of individual Project activities, this study undertakes an inductive, holistic examination of the Federal Theatre Project's goals and accomplishments in four areas (social service and relief, cultural development, artistic activities, and politics) in order to determine the effects of conflicting concepts upon the Project's effectiveness. Analyzing Works Progress Administration and Federal Theatre Project documents, personal papers of Federal Theatre Administrators, Project materials located at the Research Center for the Federal Theatre Project at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, and personal correspondence with former Federal Theatre members, this dissertation concludes that conflicts within and between Federal Theatre's four areas of concern resulted in difficulties for which it was initially unprepared and ultimately unable to control. The absence of clear, hierarchical objectives and the subservience of administration goals to personal preferences so weakened the Project that it became susceptible to attacks by Roosevelt's political opponents and eventually expired at the hands of the Special House Committee on Un-American Activities chaired by Martin Dies.

The final chapter of this study, using the Federal Theatre Project as a point of reference, postulates standards by which to determine the efficacy of government supported theatre in the United States.

PLAY THEORY AND THE PERFORMANCE OF LITERATURE Order No. DA8217943

SKINNER, JOHN FRANCIS, PH.D. *The University of Texas at Austin*, 1982. 362pp. Supervisor: Paul H. Gray

Today, a renewed concern for enriching individuals' recreation and their lives generally has escalated research and writing about play, with more than thirty books on the topic having been published during the 1970's. This study proceeds from the view that literature and performance are forms of play. It argues that by recognizing an author's playful performance *in* a text, we not only receive directions for the performance *of* that text, but also gain a fuller notion of the nature of performance itself. Using a number of recent books on physical play, books and articles on oral intepretation, and Friedrich Schiller's concept of "aesthetic play," the study examines the play in one particular poet, Howard Nemerov.

The first chapter provides a rationale for viewing literature and the performance of literature as forms of play, and emphasizes the current phenomenological perspective in oral interpretation. The second chapter surveys a number of play theories historically and develops an operational definition of play. The third chapter illuminates the play involved in the related activities of poetic composition, reading, literary criticism, and the performance of literature. This chapter draws together comments by various writers and critics to demonstrate the play inherent in all literature. It then surveys recent developments in oral interpretation theory, literary criticism, and aesthetics warranting a play perspective.

Chapter Four examines five levels of play in Nemerov's poetry: (1) his role playing, (2) semantic play, (3) phonic play, (4) syntactic play, and (5) lexical play. This chapter uses specific poems and passages to demonstrate the numerous ways Nemerov signals play in his texts. The final chapter describes a series of student performances of Nemerov poems analyzed in Chapter Four. This section describes and evaluates the ways and the extent to which the play in the texts was translated and realized in performance. The study concludes by confirming the place of play in a contemporary phenomenological view of the performance of literature, and by summarizing the implications of play for the practice, teaching, and evaluation of performed literature.

IMAGES OF BLACK WOMEN IN THE PLAYS OF BLACK FEMALE PLAYWRIGHTS, 1950-1975 Order No. DA8214438

TURNER, S. H. REGINA, PH.D. *Bowling Green State University*, 1982. 404pp.

This study was undertaken to describe the images of Black female characters in 28 selected plays of nine Black female playwrights, 1950-1975. The secondary purpose was to compare the images found in the plays to those which appeared in concurrent social science literature.

The selected playwrights were Childress, Hansberry, Jones, Anderson, Sanchez, Kennedy, Charles, Clark-Pendarvis, and Stockard Martin.

In this study, "image" consisted of available demographic information, analyses of the personal and institutional relationships, non-relationship oriented issues, pivotal relationships, and a classification of each female character according to her dominant World View.

The study showed that a great many of the images which appeared in the social science literature also appeared in the plays; however, the plays revealed more facets of a single character's personality and more consistently acknowledged the many types of Black females that exist. The plays gave more attention to socio-historical exigencies out of which the women made choices for their lives. The plays also revealed that the playwrights were often ahead of the social scientists in targeting issues that affect the well-being of Black females.

Results indicated that Black female playwrights saw racism and sexism as major factors affecting the lives of Black females. The study also suggested that the social scientists would do well to consider the plays of Black female playwrights as an added resource for better understanding the problems, strengths and weaknesses of Black women.

LONELINESS AS MOTIVE, THEME, AND STRATEGY IN AMERICAN THEATRE OF THE 1960S Order No. DA8222503

UMLAS, RODNEY JON, PH.D. *Columbia University*, 1982. 336pp.

This study examines loneliness in American drama of the 1960s. Loneliness is significant not only as a theme of many plays of this period, but also as a motive for their creation, and primary element in the strategies by which they achieve their dramatic effect. The study approaches a number of scripts as theatrical emblems of the times and examines them as manifestations of the socio-cultural state of the United States during the sixties, analyzing the treatment of loneliness in terms of dramatic technique, and exploring the relationship between loneliness in American society and its occurrence in the theatre.

The first chapter deals with the nature of loneliness, and analyzes it sociologically in historical perspective. A survey of representative plays then demonstrates a preoccupation among American playwrights with loneliness. In many instances loneliness was manifested through dramatic action in which one character seeks a kind of sympathetic connection with another solely for human contact. This engagement activity which embodies the quest of the lonely to achieve jointure is analyzed in works including those by Edward Albee and Robert Patrick. Another strategy was the use of a metaphysical stage world as embodiment of the conditions of isolation and loneliness. The device of the compressionistic *mise en scène* is examined as a physical metaphor of loneliness in a number of plays including those of Kenneth Brown, Frank Gagliano, and Paul Foster. A third technique was the creation of character-types which epitomize human isolation. The use of the "outsider" character is examined in the works of playwrights including Lanford Wilson, Leonard Melfi, Ronald Ribman, and Israel Horovitz. Experimental acting companies like the Living Theatre, the Open Theatre, and the Performance Group sought to bridge the distance separating man from man through a transformation of the theatre event into ritual. A number of their productions are assessed in terms of their intention to counter loneliness by creating ceremonies of togetherness, and the techniques employed to that end are evaluated. The study concludes that the ultimate goal of the various dramatic treatments of loneliness and the strategies which they employ is the creation of communion.